

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5572

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FOR USOAS

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: OAS, UY
SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION ON OAS NEGOTIATIONS

REF: MVD-0042 STATE 001739

1. NATIONALISTIC PRO-MILITARY "LA MANANA" FRONT-PAGED AN AFP REPORT DATEDLINE WASHINGTON UNDER THE FOUR-COLUMN HEADING, "OAS: URUGUAY MIGHT PAY COSTS OF ASSEMBLY" AND SUBHEADED "THE OFFER DESTROYS THE HIGH COST PRETEXT".

2. IN A BOX SUMMARY "LA MANANA" STATED "URUGUAY MIGHT BE WILLING TO ASSUME ALL EXPENSES REQUIRED FOR THE TRANSFER OF THE OAS TO MONTEVIDEO, IN ORDER TO HOLD THE EIGHTH ASSEMBLY (HERE). THIS WAS REPORTED UNOFFICIALLY YESTERDAY IN WASHINGTON, BUT COULD NOT BE CONFIRMED IN OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT CIRCLES. THE PRESS REPORT FROM AFP POINTS OUT THAT THE OFFER WOULD BE TRANSMITTED TO THE OAS PERMANENT COUNCIL, WHICH HAS BEEN CONVENED TO CONSIDER, NEXT WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, URUGUAY'S REQUEST TO BECOME THE SITE OF THE MINISTERS CONFERENCE."

3. ACCORDING TO THE AFP DESPATCH PUBLISHED BY "LA MANANA", ONLY THREE COUNTRIES HAVE ASSUMED AN OPENLY NEGATIVE POSITION ON HAVEING THE ASSEMBLY IN URUGUAY. THE UNITED STATES, VENEZUELA AND JAMAICA ARE PREPARED TO REJECT THE OFFER, GIVING AS A PRETEXT THE MEATY
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MATTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS EXPECTED THAT SEVERAL COUNTRIES, AMONG THEM COLOMBIA AND ECUADOR, THINK THAT POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS LIKE HUMAN RIGHTS SHOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH THE SELECTION OF A MEETING SITE."

4. "THE ONLY TENABLE ARGUMENT COUNTRIES IN THAT POSITION CAN POINT TO IS THE HIGH COST OF AN ASSEMBLY HELD SO FAR FROM THE

PERMANENT SITE, WHICH INCLINES THEM TO A NEGATIVE VOTE. FOR THAT REASON, THE GOU OFFER NOW MADE PUBLIC ONLY UNOFFICIALLY, HAS HELPED DECISIVELY TO REDUCE THE INITIAL OPPOSITION FOR HOLDING THE MEETING OUTSIDE WASHINGTON..."

5. THE AFP ADDS THAT "FEW BELIEVE, THEREFORE, THAT THE COUNCIL WILL TAKE A DECISION NEXT WEDNESDAY. ACCORDING TO ITS PRESIDENT, GALO LEORO OF ECUADOR, THE QUESTION WILL BE SUBMITTED FIRST TO THE GENERAL COMMISSION, WHOSE DELIBERATIONS ARE CONDUCTED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS."

6. INDEPENDENT "EL DIA" CARRIED A SHORT ITEM AT THE BOTTOM IT ITS EDITORIAL PAGE UNDER A FOUR-COLUMN HEADING, "URUGUAY STILL INTERESTED IN ORGANIZING OAS MEETING." THE PAPER QUOTED FOREIGN MINISTER ROVIRA EXPLAINING THERE WAS "NOTHING NEW" ON THE SUBJECT. ROVIRA REPEATED THAT "IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO AWAIT THE DECISION OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL." THE FOREIGN MINISTER TOLD "EL DIA" THAT "URUGUAY IS THE TARGET OF A FORCEFUL CAMPAIGN BY THIRD PARTIES..." ROVIRA THEN RESTATED THE GOU POSITION THAT "EVERYONE CAN CLEARLY APPRECIATE THAT THERE IS NO VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS" IN URUGUAY.

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